

Appl. No. : 10/698,875
Filed : October 31, 2003

REMARKS

Claims 1-32 are pending prior to entry of the present amendment. Claims 20-32 are cancelled herewith as drawn to non-elected species. Claims 1, 5 and 6 are amended herewith. Claims 5, 6, 9-18 are withdrawn, but reinstatement is requested herein in view of the allowability of generic Claim 1.

Amendments

Applicants have amended Claim 1 to clarify that the "contoured" opening has a "curvature selected to mate with and receive the edge region of the workpiece." The amendment is supported, for example, by Figure 3B as filed, and the application as filed at p. 6, paragraph 33.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1-4 and 19 as being anticipated by Sato et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,968,375).

Applicants submit that Sato et al. fail to teach or suggest the contoured opening shape as recited in amended Claim 1. In fact, Sato et al. particularly teach the advantages of using a roller 21b, which is curved in an opposite manner to that recited in order to rotate the roller 21b and deliver the etching solution to the wafer in that manner.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that Sato et al. fail to teach or suggest the method of Claim 1. Claims 3-4 and 19 depend from and therefore include all the features and limitations of Claim 1, in addition to further distinguishing features of particular utility.

The Examiner has also rejected Claims 1-4 and 19 as being anticipated by Redeker et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,523,553)..

Applicants submit that Redeker et al. fail to teach or suggest the contoured opening shape as recited in amended Claim 1. Redeker et al. employ a trough 31 that is gravitationally below an upright wafer (see Col. 5, lines 14-19), such that the shape of the etchant pool is controlled by gravity. See Col. 5, lines 14-19. Accordingly, Redeker et al. neither teach nor suggest a curved trough.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that Sato et al. fail to teach or suggest the method of Claim 1. Claims 3-4 and 19 depend from and therefore include all the features and limitations of Claim 1, in addition to further distinguishing features of particular utility.

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Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103

The Examiner has rejected Claims 7-8 as being obvious over by Sato et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,968,375) in view of Radman et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,550,091).

As noted above, Sato et al. neither teaches nor suggests a contoured opening with a "curvature selected to mate with and receive the edge region of the workpiece." In fact, Sato et al. teach the desirability of their opening being curved oppositely to that recited, in order to rotate the roller 21b and thereby deliver the etching solution to the wafer. *See Col. 6, lines 14-17.*

The roller 202 of Radman et al. is similarly shaped, and is similarly designed to rotate, such that Radman et al. therefore fails to supply the deficient teachings of Sato et al.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the applied art neither teaches nor suggests the features of amended Claim 1, much less the combination of Claim 1 with the further distinguishing features of the dependent claims.

Request for Reinstatement of Withdrawn Claims 5-6 and 9-18

In view of the allowability of Claim 1, applicants respectfully request reinstatement and allowance of dependent Claims 5-6 and 9-18. Applicants note that Claim 1 remains generic to these method claims following the present amendment.

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CONCLUSIONS

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the application is in condition for allowance and request the same. If, however, some issue remains that the Examiner feels can be addressed by Examiner Amendment, the Examiner is cordially invited to call the undersigned for authorization.

Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410.

Respectfully submitted,

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